

Weare Open Space Committee
Minutes
March 25, 2008
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In attendance were: Ian McSweeney, Pat Myers, Andrea Alderman, George Malette, and John Ciampi.

This meeting began at 7:10 PM.

Minutes – The minutes of January 22 were reviewed by Committee members. George made motion to accept the minutes as written, and Pat 2nd. All voted to accept the minutes as written, with two abstentions (John and Andrea).

Election of Officers – Pat nominated Steve Najjar to be reelected as Chair of the OSC, and John 2nd. All voted in favor and the motion carries. Andrea volunteered to continue on in her current capacity as vice-chair with the caveat she may be leaving before her term expires because of a pending geographical relocation situation. George made motion to re-nominate Andrea as vice-chair, to which Pat 2nd. All voted in favor and this motion carries. As with the vice-chair scenario, John agreed to continue in his current capacity as Secretary with the understanding he may quit this position before his term expires due to upcoming professional retirement and subsequent relocation. George nominated John as Secretary, and Pat 2nd. All voted in favor and the motion carries.

Conservation Fund – George calculated the current balance on the Conservation Fund to be \$459,002.59 as of last quarter. There is a gap of \$36,000.00 due to the Brown Easement Land Deal. However, the Mildred Hall Advisory Committee has offered to donate 2/3's of the \$36,000.00 (\$24,000.00) and hopefully the Russell Foundation would pony up the remainder. Ian noted he will speak with Brenda Lind and is confident there is strong potential for some type of donation from the Foundation along with another funding source, possibly a grant. Ian added that the \$36,000.00 shortfall was due to an increase in the appraisal value of the Brown Land Deal. Ian then mentioned that the Federal contribution should also be increased because they had agreed to fund up to 50% of the appraisal.

Mildred Hall Advisory Committee – George informed the Committee the MHAC would like to be kept updated on developments of the Wilson Hawkes land contact, presumably because of a possible future land donation. Currently there is a balance of \$881,937.00 in the MHAC fund.

Land Contacts:

- Gregg Steiner – Andrea contacted Mr. Steiner and left him a message to inform him that this land contact is currently on hold due to lack of funding.

To date, he has not returned the call. He has about an 18 month window to keep this project open.

- Dot O'Neil – She has not yet had an appraisal, but is quite serious about putting land under conservation. However she is not willing to wait forever. Andrea suggested possibly waiting about a year before revisiting this contact. Ian volunteered to contact her in the near future.
- Pinard – Pat asked if his appraisal was finished. This land contact was to place a conservation easement on the property. Andrea doesn't believe this appraisal was not included in the group appraisal earlier submitted.
- Shattuck – Has his property on the market for \$158,000.00.
- Ray Banks – He should be contacted and updated on the current financial development.
- Silvia Pope – She has gone back and forth with correspondence and currently lives in Florida. Recommended to keep her on the list.
- Bailey – Probably out of the picture.
- Gagnon – Pat suggested to take her off the list as her land is mostly wetland and unbuildable.
- McKevitt – Have not heard from him. John will attempt another contact.
- Farmer – The planned site walk never materialized and he is difficult to contact.
- Dorothy Cleves – she has not responded to letters or phone calls sent by Ian.
- Farr – John and Ian have been unsuccessful in connecting with him.
- Erickson – On hold for now.

Re-allotment of Appraisal Funds – George made motion that monies allotted for land appraisals be placed back into the Conservation Fund, reason being if property isn't purchased before the appraisal runs out, then that money will be unrecoverable. The focused properties are O'Neil, Shattuck, and Pinard. Pat 2nd the motion, all voted in favor, and the motion carries.

Meeting Schedule – Andrea suggested that the OSC continue to meet monthly as there are other issues to discuss such as funding, establishment of priorities, etc.

Funding – Ian mentioned looking into possible funding sources such as grants, the Russell Foundation, NH Charitable Foundations, and grants available for small parcels that are merged into larger conservation lands and then placed into an easement. Ian has volunteered to work on the funding issue.

Goffstown News Editorial – Ian referenced an editorial in the Goffstown News which stressed the need for Weare to generate more revenue and questioned the reasoning for seeking more conservation land when there are other priorities which should be sought after, such as road maintenance, police, EMTs, etc. Pat concluded this article and a similar one in the Concord Monitor generate negativity concerning land conservation and proposed writing a rebuttal, either as a Committee or private citizen.

Land Encroachment – Pat and Ian drew attention to a problematic scenario concerning conservation land encroachment such as could occur with snow mobile

trails, which has happened in the Town Forest with the Transfer Station, lands not permanently protected, and the merger of the Bolton Field with the Wood property conservation land. They stressed the need to strengthen the wording of pertinent legal contracts which would benefit both parties involved.

OSC By-laws – George recommended reviewing the OSC by-laws for updating purposes, and being more explicit in defining goals and objectives. George recommended bringing this matter before the Conservation Commission for discussion.

Future Goals – Andrea listed and summarized the goals and agenda for the OSC:

- Responding to recent negative newspaper articles.
- Placing easements on Town owned conservation lands.
- Grant sources and other funding.
- Using the NRI to identify land suitable for protection
- Review the by-laws, succinctly and explicitly redefining its mission.
- Combining conservation lands for ease in identifying and monitoring.
- Conservation planning, i.e., not allowing commercial industry over aquifers (ref. the town's service stations are over aquifers).
- Pat will draft a letter addressed to land contacts updating the current financial status of the OSC.
- Pat suggested designing a monitoring and stewardship plan (ref. the Collins Landing violation).
- George recommended putting some thought into establishment of a stewardship fund.

Adjournment – John made motion to adjourn, and Pat 2nd. All voted in favor, the motion carries, and the meeting adjourned at 9PM.

Respectfully Submitted,

John Ciampi
OSC Secretary

Cc: Files
Merry Rice
BOS
Naomi Bolton